



Unauthorized Radio Operation

Federal law generally prohibits radio broadcasts without a license issued by the FCC. Anyone found operating a radio station without FCC authorization can be subject to a variety of enforcement actions, including seizure of equipment, fines, and other civil and criminal penalties.

Authorized exceptions

There are certain limited exceptions to this rule: Operation of Citizens Band (CB) radios, domestic ship and aircraft radios, radio control stations and certain other types of devices is allowed without obtaining an individual license. Use of these devices must comply with the FCC's operational and technical rules or it can be considered an unauthorized radio operation. For additional information, review the FCC's consumer guide at www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/personal-radio-services-prs-keeping-touch.

Filing a complaint

Please notify the FCC if you are suspicious of or are aware of an unauthorized radio station operation. You have multiple options for filing a complaint:

- File a complaint online at: <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information, and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Consumer Help Center

For more information on consumer issues, visit the FCC's Consumer Help Center at www.fcc.gov/consumers.

Alternate formats

To request this article in an alternate format: braille, large print, Word or text document, or audio - write or call us at the address or phone numbers above, or send an email to fcc504@fcc.gov.

Last Reviewed 12/30/19

